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LANGUAGE ARTS PRODUCT EVALUATION

The Evaluation of Written Composition
Teacher Marking Packages

Grande Prairie School District No. 2357

Alberta Education

Alberta
EDUCATION



LANGUAGE ARTS PRODUCT EVALUATION
THE EVALUATION OF WRITTEN COMPOSITION
GRADE THREE

TEACHER MARKING PACKAGE

November 1984

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The contents of this Teacher Marking Package are not intended to imply, either explicitly or otherwise, Alberta Education policy regarding the evaluation of students' writing skills or the evaluation of teaching performance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The District would like to thank all the people who contributed to this project: the teachers who administered the writing task, the scorers, the consultant and supervisors and the clerical staff. The improvement of written composition is a continuing goal of this District, and this project has not only provided some baseline data to help determine whether we are achieving that goal; it has also contributed to the professional growth of all involved.

D. R. Taylor
Superintendent of Schools

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I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In June 1984 the Grande Prairie School District did an assessment of the writing competence of its grade three students. The grade three students were asked to write in the descriptive mode. More specifically, each grade three class was required to write a description of a large poster sized color picture. (50cm by 75cm). The picture showed nine hot air balloons in various stages of inflation. The background showed Bear Creek, trees, spectators and houses. The identical poster was distributed to each school along with the following specific directions to teachers:

1. Background

This test is part of a total language arts assessment research project in the District. The purposes of the test are as follows:

- A. To develop a statement outlining the criteria/standards by which descriptive writing produced by Grade 3 students can be evaluated.
- B. To determine the number of students in the District who write to these standards as determined by a committee of teachers.
- C. To determine the reliability of holistic committee scoring procedures at this level.
- D. To compare holistic scoring which produces only one general impression score with that which produces scores in component areas of writing skills such as content, development, sentence structure, vocabulary and conventions on such bases as:
 - i. Time and cost
 - ii. Teacher satisfaction
 - iii. Reliability

District results from this test will be shared with everyone in the District. School results will be shared only with the school to which they pertain.

Attempts will be made to publish representative compositions receiving excellent, good, fair and poor grades and descriptions of them. These should prove useful to all teachers in setting realistic expectations for their students in the future.

The specific District objective to which this relates is as follows:

"Given a wide range of sensory experiences with an object, the student writes a description of a maximum of 100 words using appropriate vocabulary to identify a minimum of 6 attributes."

2. Administration Time Permitted

It is intended that adequate time be provided so that no student is penalized because of time pressure. Therefore, even though very few students are likely to use the full time allotment, they should be provided a minimum of two consecutive class periods, preferably at a time in which they are fresh (For example, 9:00-10:20 a.m. or 1:00 - 2:20 p.m.).

Alternate quiet activities such as recreational reading or worksheet assignments should be provided for those who finish early.

3. Use of Posters

You have been provided two or three color posters. Place them in your classroom so that all the students can easily see one of the posters from where they are seated. You might wish to divide the students into groups for this purpose. Try to avoid crowding of desks to prevent copying or "borrowing" of ideas.

Students may have questions about the posters. "What are those?" etc. Do not answer any such questions. Simply explain that they are to "paint a word picture of everything they can" in the scene. Students may also want to leave their desks for a "close look". This should not be permitted either, as there should be adequate detail to allow for their descriptive abilities without providing this assistance.

4. Procedure

- A. Group your students and posters as indicated in III above, so that all can easily see a poster.
- B. Make sure that all students have pencils and an eraser and a clear desk.
- C. Hand out the student test sheets, and read through the instructions with the students.
- D. The I.D. Number area on the tests is not for the students' use, or for yours. Tell the students to ignore it.
- E. If students ask the usual "how long should it be?" questions, tell them that it can be as long as they want - there are no

limits. However, it has to say enough to "paint a complete word picture" of the scene.

- F. Students can't use dictionaries or other aids. You should not supply them with words.
- G. Students may use manuscript or cursive writing, whichever they are most comfortable with.
- H. When students are clear about the instructions, have them begin. Circulate around the class to see that they have begun, but do not provide assistance.

After approximately 30 minutes, allow students a "stretch break" of one to five minutes.

- I. As students complete their work, collect it from them and make sure they have recorded their names properly.
- J. Group the completed tests alphabetically and forward them to Keith Wagner at Central Office.

The following specific instructions were given to students:

THIS IS A TEST TO SEE HOW WELL YOU CAN DESCRIBE A PICTURE IN WRITING.
DO YOUR VERY BEST WORK.

Look at the posters that your teacher will show you. This is a picture of a scene in Bear Creek Park here in Grande Prairie.

Imagine that you are on a hill above the scene. Write about the scene so that someone who is not there can form a picture of it in his mind. Don't tell a story. Write a description. Paint a picture with your words. Use your senses. Tell about what you can see. Tell about the colors and shape and sizes. Imagine what you might hear and smell, and tell about that too.

You can make your description as long as you want. Whoever reads what you write should get a good picture of the scene. Use enough words and sentences to tell everything you can about the scene.

Before you begin, here are some rules:

1. The description must be your own. You can't talk to anyone else.
2. The words that you use must be your own. You can't ask your teacher for words or spellings. Don't worry too much about your spelling. Just do the best you can.
3. You should use a pencil for your writing. If you want to change anything, erase it neatly and then write it the way you wanted it to be.

The tests were then collected, assigned a random identification number and scored by a team of grade three teachers during the first week of July. The papers were first scored holistically for a general impression score. Approximately forty papers per hour were scored in this manner.

Holistic scoring is a process by which a written composition is assigned a mark in terms of how well it meets a predetermined set of criteria. In order to complete this task the team of teachers established the criteria for a descriptive passage based on a scale of 0-5 with 0 being the lowest score awarded and 5 being the highest score given. The specific criteria for this is included in the next section of this document. Each member of the team read each paper and assigned it a mark which was recorded on a separate marking sheet. The mark was not put on the paper. Thus markers did not know the identity of the author or the mark awarded by other markers.

These papers were then rescored again in a holistic manner but this time in each of five writing components areas. Criteria were established for these five sub-components:

- Content
- Development
- Sentence Structure
- Vocabulary
- Conventions

The criteria for each of these components was based on the descriptors established for the June 84 Grade 6 provincial language arts exam. They can be found in the next section of this package. The same marking procedure as for general impression was followed. Using this approach, an average of 14 papers per hour were scored completely for all five sub-components.

II. SCORING CRITERIA AND EXAMPLES

1. The Criteria

GENERAL IMPRESSION SCORING DESCRIPTORS FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MODE

5 Excellent

- exceptionally developed detail
- precise vocabulary - vocabulary displays a variety of new and interesting words
 - comparisons create vivid impressions
- displays exceptional thought and organization
- shows some evidence of style
- a dominant impression may be evident
- few mechanical errors - punctuation
 - sentence structure
 - capitalization
 - spelling

4 Very Good

- well developed detail
- some precise vocabulary
- displays good evidence of thought and organization
- some mechanical errors - but these don't interfere with readability or meaning
- also includes Number 5 papers with many mechanical errors.

3 Average

- displays some thought and organization
- sufficient detail
- length is adequate to complete the task
- uses vocabulary appropriate to grade level
- mechanical errors interfere somewhat with the message and the readability.

2 Poor

- length is inadequate to complete the task
- lack of detail
- vague vocabulary - dull uninteresting words
- lack of thought and organization
- overall impression of disorder due to jumbled arrangement of ideas
- irrelevant details
- mechanical errors greatly interfere with message

1 Little or No Communication

- mechanical errors interfere with meaning to the extent that the composition is nearly illegible
- completely off topic

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for judgement to be made

CONTENT SCORING DESCRIPTORS
FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- specific details used to describe setting and activities
- creates an atmosphere through the use of the senses
- creates a vivid overall impression and gives clear physical descriptions
- good use of imagery
- captures a dominant impression or sense of style

4 Proficient

- some specific details to describe setting
- some general sense of atmosphere is created
- appeals to most of the senses
- use of imagery is evident

3 Satisfactory

- evidence of specific appropriate details
- some attempt to create an atmosphere or overall impression
- attempts to use imagery

2 Limited

- few appropriate details
- very little attempt to create atmosphere
- limited appeal to senses
- very little use of imagery

1 Poor

- no appropriate details
- setting is not developed
- no sense of atmosphere
- no imagery

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for judgement to be made

DEVELOPMENT SCORING DESCRIPTORS
FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- displays coherent thought and organization
- there is evidence of paragraphing
- organized sequence of descriptions and events
- shows excellent sense of beginning and closure

4 Proficient

- displays good evidence of thought and organization
- good sense of beginning and closure
- may have some slight confusion in flow of ideas

3 Satisfactory

- descriptions are in generally coherent sequence
- some sense of closure is evident
- some disorganization of ideas

2 Limited

- limited sense of sequencing the descriptions
- absence of sense of closure
- weak sense of organization

1 Poor

- no sequencing
- no closure
- no evidence of organization

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for judgement to be made

SENTENCE STRUCTURES SCORING DESCRIPTORS
FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- good variety of sentence structures, type, length is used
- controlled used of co-ordination
- sentence fragments if evident are used for effect

4 Proficient

- some variety in sentence structure, type and length
- little over-use of co-ordination
- few sentence fragments

3 Satisfactory

- little variety in sentence structure, type and length
- some over-use of co-ordination
- some sentence fragments evident

2 Limited

- most sentences are simple sentences
- little variety in length and structure
- definite use of co-ordination
- may have many sentence fragments

1 Poor

- sentences are immature and repetitious
- almost exclusive use of co-ordination
- sentence fragments impede meaning

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for a judgement to be made

VOCABULARY SCORING DESCRIPTORS
FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- specific, concrete, interesting words have been selected to create vivid images and precise details
- denotative meanings are accurate and effective

4 Proficient

- frequent use of specific concrete words adds clarity to the detail created
- denotative meanings are most frequently accurate and effective

3 Satisfactory

- some use of specific, concrete words
- some use of general words
- denotations are mostly correct

2 Limited

- few specific concrete words
- most words are general
- some inaccuracy of meaning

1 Poor

- only vague, general words are used
- restricted choice of words
- inaccuracy of meaning

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for judgement to be made

CONVENTIONS SCORING DESCRIPTORS
FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- the communicative power of the composition is enhanced because of careful form, spelling, usage, punctuation and capitalization and neatness of writing.

4 Proficient

- communication is clear because of essentially correct form, spelling, usage, punctuation and capitalization
- few errors in proportion to length

3 Satisfactory

- some errors in form, spelling, punctuation, usage and capitalization but communication is adequate

2 Limited

- frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, usage and capitalization reduce communication
- work is not neatly done

1 Poor

- very weak in communication due to incorrect spelling, no punctuation and capitalization and poor grammar
- poor printing/writing make it very hard to read

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for a judgement to be made

2. Applying the Criteria

Included here are ten grade three papers on which to practice the practical application of this scoring method. Read each paper and by referring back to the descriptors assess a mark from 0-5 for each of the areas. You must remember to check the criteria for each sub-component before reading the paper to mark for that component. As a means of comparison, you can find the scores that the marking team awarded each paper by looking in the appendix section of this document.

It is important to refer always to the descriptors and mark according to how the paper meets those standards. Try not to compare papers to ones read previously.

Also, when marking for sentence structure you may have to mentally put in the correct punctuation - if the sentence structure is there the paper will be penalized in the conventions section for lack of punctuation, but shouldn't be penalized twice.

MARKING SHEET

Paper #	General Impression	Content	Develop.	Sentence Structure	Vocabulary	Conventions
77						
29						
36						
109						
233						
125						
113						
134						
176						
18						

In this picture half of Bear Creek is surrounded by eight balloons. On the left side of the picture is a fully inflated balloon. It has yellow, orange, red, pink, blue and green stripes. The top and bottom of this balloon is black. The balloon right behind this balloon is partly inflated. It has yellow, green and orange stripes. The more farther away balloons are all inflated except for one. All the balloons are striped. The cars, trucks and vans are all attached to the balloons. On the green grass hundred and hundreds of people are waiting for the race to begin.

Even Bear Creek is waiting.
It's running south with the
wind. Right now the work-
men are pumping air into
the two uninflated. There.
Now for the count down,
5, 4, 3, 2, 1 GO!

Seven balloons

I.D. NUMBER

29

Seven beautiful balloons at a park. They are big and colorful. One has black on the top and black on the bottom and in the middle of the balloon has lots of different colors. The other ones are lots of different colors. They have a big basket on the bottom of the balloon and the balloon is made from material and the basket is made from bamboo. Lot and lots of people were looking at the balloons and there are cars and trucks. There is water in front of the balloons and there is trees, bushes and grass. The balloons are on the grass. You can barely see the houses and you can barely see the trees. The balloons are as size as a house and the people are as small as a

turn
over.

figer mail, And it is a suny butful
day. The end

it is a good of the
balloons it is a nice one.
niceser When the other
Pating's I with I
was a teacher of the
classroom and of the
class too But I'm
still a child But
I with I was the
bigist in my family,
I with I was 19 year
old So I can be a
teacher a teacher is fun
I but I with that,
I was in a art balloon
too with my family,
and when I was
little baby I want
in one and that is,
oh I want in a
art balloons So. Since
then I do not go in one

maybe next Summer,
I was go in a art column.
all by my sis are with,
my Sisrer and borer are
maybe my mom and dad and,
maybe with my ante,

thea.

Colored Raindrops

Here are lots of hot air balloons and alot of busy people. The balloons all together look like rainbow colored raindrops falling from the sky. Six of the brightly colored, hot air balloons are ready to take off. Three of them are half blown up. The positioning of the balloons are two in the lower left hand corner, seven at the top of the picture coming downward in a line.

Two balloons that aren't blown up are out of line. They sound like a big giant huffing and puffing. The balloons stand beside a baby blue creek. The creek divides Bear creek into two parts. The balloons are standing on one part and a whole bunch of people are standing on the other part. Beside the balloons are trucks with people in, helping them get the balloons going. The trucks look very small be-

turn
over

side the large hot air balloons.

The color of the grass is a healthy color of green. On the grass stand many many people. They all look like very colorful dots or sticks. In the middle of the grass stands a dark green clump of trees. On the edge of the clump is a little white building. It has about three windows, a chimney stack and a door. In the lower right hand corner is a very dark spot. The darkness is made from the shade of balloons. In the dark spot there are a few popular trees growing. At the back there is a nice big group of trees. Behind it there are houses and buildings. The sky looks like a strip of very pale blue paper. This is a very happy scene.

I.D. NUMBER

233

theirs people theirs. balloons theirs
trees. theirs trucks a river and
bushes and houses a trell theirs
rope holding the balloons theirs
numbers on the balloons the air
smell and gas and fire and smock,
8 balloons and grass and cress
and some rocks a brick a
parking lot a road and water
and weeds.

See. There's a creek looks like a thick ribbon.

Not all of the balloons are up yet, some colors are, Black as the beginning of night, Yellows of clear days, Green as newly grass in the summer, Blue as 9:00 sky, Natural blue, Romy pink, Red as blood, Orange as an Orange, Yellow again, And black at the end of lots of people, reactions, A bridge, In the background is a city, lots of trees, It's morning, pine trees, oak trees, One of the balloons says, C-GY21, I see lots of parts one of the balloons has an orange on top, with red, yellow, and green colors on it, There's a person on the fringe, there's another fringe for cars sound's A long wash lots of those washing sounds, the creek is flowing, it goes shhhhhhh the wind swaying in the trees sounds like rustling back and forth, Some people are wearing shorts, And some people are wearing pants.

Feb The dollone feels like a blown up
material, rubber, soft, non furry,
Non hard, delacit, feels warm, when up
in air feels windy, very coforting.

Not too long ago a group of people got together and they decided they would all go to Bear Creek Park with their hot air balloons. When they got there they all set up their balloons. Wow! What a sight! There were brown ones, black ones, red ones. Every colour you can think of! There were all different shapes and sizes. When they got back it was

about 6:00 pm. When it was over
everybody went home. None of
them could wait until they
could do it again!

Balloon Park

There are lots of spruce trees and bushes. There's a stream to wade in. There is lots of shade from the trees. There are lots of pretty scents from the flowers. Some of the grass is green and other parts are yellow still. There some sand to play in. There are some houses in the background. Every balloon has its own special number or I.D. on it. The balloons have lots of colors like black, yellow, green, blue, red, pink and purple. Some people are watching and two are riding and one is driving. Summer and Fall are the best times to go balloon riding, I think. There are cars park right close to the balloons. As soon as all of the balloons are ready the race starts.

There were events at the park. There were eight hot air balloons. I was on a hill above the scene. My favorite balloon was the one that was bright yellow like the sun, with pretty orange stripes going down the way. It made funny sounds with the fire thing that looked like a burner off our barbaque. Anyway the fire made the balloon go up and up so that I couldn't see it any more. But that was o.k. because I just selected another one. And then I went up and up till my mother and Father couldn't see me any more. And I think my mom started to cry and my dad was yelling come back. It was quite hot in the basket but I could stand it when we got really high up the people looked like insects, and the trees looked like carrot tops, and the other

balloons birds eggs. Pretty small ones
to. I'm glad they made baskets on the
balloons, or else I would be broiling
because I would be at the top
of the balloon by now. But by
now I was afraid, I was going to
fall in the river, that looked
like a puddle from where I was
standing.

The pitcher is taken in
Bear creek. In this pitcher
there are hot air balloons in
the park & balloons ready
to launch off. There's also some
balloons that getting ready to
go up. And there's lots of
green trees. The trucks that
bring the balloons there
are waiting to take ^{them} back.
And lots of shade and
people and if I was there I
would smell the nice warm
wind. And nice blue sky
and the blue stream and
There's black, yellow, blue and
pink, orange ^{and} green, brown and
purple and you could
see some of Grande
Prairie that's if you
come on top of
the hill there's shade.

spots here and there
and men are holding
balloons down because
there going up some are
laing down.

Here are the last
two words of this story
the end.

III. PRACTICAL CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS

The holistic approach to marking identified components of student writing has several practical classroom applications.

It can assist the teacher in diagnosing strengths and weaknesses both in student performance and program delivery. This scoring method provides the teacher with very useful and appropriate feedback for reporting student progress and in planning individual program strategies. Having a standard set of criteria leads to a more objective and consistent evaluation of student writing.

Teacher marking time can be more effectively utilized by providing a greater focus for the evaluation of student writing. It is not necessary to mark every writing assignment for all components. If you have, for example, taught a lesson on the use of specific versus general words, you could mark the written assignment using only the vocabulary criteria.

Another application of the criterion is for students use in evaluating their own papers. It would be possible to put the criteria in a more simplified form so that students could gain some appreciation for the elements of good writing. They could grade their own performance and see how they could improve their written composition based on the marking criteria. Although students would probably experience some problem initially, this approach could be employed to develop skills in proofreading and editing both a student's own work or the work of others.

IV. RESULTS SUMMARY

1. Overall District Results - Grade Three Written Composition

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Confidence Int.
General Impression	2.6	.7	2.5 - 2.7
Content	2.8	.7	2.7 - 2.8
Vocabulary	2.6	.7	2.6 - 2.7
Conventions	2.6	.8	2.5 - 2.7
Development	2.4	.8	2.3 - 2.5
Sentence Structure	2.7	.8	2.6 - 2.8
Average of 5 Components	2.6	.6	2.6 - 2.7

2. Correlation Among Written Composition Variables

	Impr.	Cont.	Devl.	Sent.	Vocab.	Conv.	Averg.
Impression	1.00	.72	.60	.68	.61	.68	.77
Content		1.00	.66	.64	.76	.62	.86
Development			1.00	.64	.65	.55	.83
Sentence				1.00	.67	.71	.87
Vocabulary					1.00	.58	.85
Conventions						1.00	.83
Average of Sub-Comp							1.00

A correlation coefficient is an index of the linear relationship between two variables. A perfect correlation relationship is 1 (as one variable goes up the other goes up as well) but a correlation greater than .5 is considered significant.

3. Percentiles for Written Composition Variables

Score	Impr.	Cont.	Devl.	Sent.	Vocab.	Conv.	Averg.
.7	1		1	1	1		
1.0	3		3	3	3	2	1
1.3	5	1	10	4	5	7	2
1.7	12	5	23	11	10	14	5
2.0	30	20	41	21	22	32	15
2.3	46	36	58	35	41	51	29
2.7	66	57	74	56	62	67	59
3.0	81	76	82	74	84	78	75
3.3	88	87	90	83	90	86	85
3.7	94	95	92	93	95	91	93
4.0	97	97	97	98	97	94	98
4.3	98	98	99	98	98	97	98
4.7	99	99		99	99	99	99

4. Reliability Study - Written Composition Marking

Grade	Scale	All Agrees	All Within 1	Disagree
Three	General Imp.	32%	90%	10%
	Content	30%	88%	12%
	Development	21%	80%	20%
	Sentence	23%	83%	17%
	Vocabulary	32%	91%	9%
	Conventions	34%	96%	4%
Four	General Imp.	32%	87%	13%
	Content	34%	89%	11%
and	Development	24%	78%	22%
	Sentence	25%	80%	20%
Five	Vocabulary	39%	90%	10%
	Conventions	24%	81%	19%

Dr. Tom Maguire of the University of Alberta carried out the above inter-rater reliability study. Essentially, this is a statistical measure of the amount of agreement or disagreement among the raters who scored the papers. This type of study sheds light on the question of whether, in this type of scoring, there is adequate agreement among raters that the process can be considered reliable. Dr. Maguire's conclusion was that in terms of reliability, the judges or raters had done an excellent job. He suggested that it would be safe to use two raters, and in the event of disagreement, a third head scorer could cast a deciding vote.

V. APPENDIX A - ANSWER GUIDE

Following are the marks that the marking team gave each paper.

Paper	General Impression	Content	Develop	Sentence Structure	Vocabulary	Conventions
77	4	3	3	4	4	4
29	3	3	3	3	2	3
36	1	1	1	1	1	1
109	4	5	5	4	4	5
233	2	2	1	1	1	1
125	3	3	2	2	4	2
113	2	2	3	4	2	4
134	3	3	2	3	3	4
176	3	4	2	3	3	3
18	2	3	2	2	2	1

V. APPENDIX B - SCORING DESCRIPTORS FOR NARRATIVE WRITING MODE
REPORTING CATEGORY: CONTENT
 (Selecting Details Appropriate to Purpose)

SCORE		DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE
5	EXCEPTIONAL	Events are plausible within a context that is clearly established by the writer. Events and actions are connected implicitly to character motivation. Many precise and appropriate details establish characters and events even though experiences may be of an everyday nature.
4	PROFICIENT	Most events are plausible within a context that is clearly established by the writer. Events and actions are sometimes connected to character motivation. Many appropriate details establish characters and events even though experiences may be of an everyday nature.
3	SATISFACTORY	Some events are plausible within a context that is clearly established by the writer. Events and actions are infrequently connected to character motivation. Some appropriate details establish characters and events even though experiences may be of an everyday nature.
2	LIMITED	Few events are plausible within a context that is vaguely established by the writer. Events and actions are rarely connected to character motivation. Few appropriate details establish characters and events.
1	POOR	Events may be plausible but a context is unclear. There is a lack of appropriate detail.
0	INSUFFICIENT	Too little writing exists for a judgement to be formed.

- Taken from Grade 3 Provincial Language Arts Test Specifications.
- That which the student chooses to write about. This includes the WHO, WHAT, WHERE, and WHEN of a story.
- Details selected by the student will be either descriptive or narrative and associated with characters or events.

REPORTING CATEGORY: DEVELOPMENT
(Organizing Details into a Coherent Whole)

SCORE		DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE
5	EXCEPTIONAL	Events have been placed in a coherent and recognizable sequence. The story's unity is strengthened by details about character and actions. Digressive details, if present, do not interfere with the development of the story. Appropriate closure has been achieved.
4	PROFICIENT	Events have been placed in a coherent sequence. The story's unity is sometimes supported by details about characters and actions. Digressive details, if present, do not interfere with the development of the story. Closure has been achieved.
3	SATISFACTORY	Events have been placed in a generally coherent sequence. Digressive details begin to interfere with the story's development. Closure has been attempted.
2	LIMITED	A sequence of events can be detected, but coherence is not achieved. Digressive details interfere with the unity of the story. Closure, if attempted, is unsuccessful.
1	POOR	No coherent sequence of events is apparent. Digressive details, if present, interfere greatly with the unity of the story. A sense of closure is missing.
0	INSUFFICIENT	Too little writing exists for a judgement to be formed. Writing that has been awarded an "Ins" for CONTENT is insufficient.

The method by which the student chooses to organize the content. This includes the sequence of events by which the student organizes the story into a coherent whole. The sequence may involve ordering by cause and effect, but more usually involves a sequence ordered by time and/or by place.

REPORTING CATEGORY: SENTENCE STRUCTURE
(Structuring Sentences Appropriately)

SCORE		DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE
5	EXCEPTIONAL	Appropriate and/or purposeful variation in sentence type, length, and structure is evident. Co-ordination and subordination have been used appropriately. Sentence fragments and/or run-on sentences, if present, do not impede meaning.
4	PROFICIENT	Some appropriate and/or purposeful variation in sentence type, length, and structure is evident. Co-ordination and subordination are used appropriately but co-ordination is predominant. Sentence fragments and/or run-on sentences, if present, do not impede meaning.
3	SATISFACTORY	Occasional appropriate and/or purposeful variation in sentence type, length, and structure is evident. Co-ordination is used extensively but some subordination is present. Sentence fragments and/or run-on sentences, if present, do not impede meaning.
2	LIMITED	Little appropriate and/or purposeful variation in sentence type, length, and structure is evident. Co-ordination has been overused, sometimes inappropriately. Sentence fragments and/or run-on sentences, if present, impede meaning.
1	POOR	Co-ordination has been used almost exclusively and inappropriately. Sentence fragments and/or run-on sentences, if present, impede meaning.
0	INSUFFICIENT	Too little writing exists for a judgement to be formed. Writing that has been awarded an "Ins" for CONTENT is insufficient.

The forms of the sentences that the student uses. The category, sentence structure, includes the types of sentences, co-ordination (i.e., linkage of clauses, e.g., "...and so..." or "...but..."), subordination (e.g., "...because..." or "...then..."), and the arrangement within a sentence (e.g., subject/verb/object). Sentence fragments and/or run-on sentences are considered to be part of "sentence structure" rather than "conventions."

REPORTING CATEGORY: VOCABULARY
(Selecting and Using Words and Expressions Appropriately)

SCORE		DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE
5	EXCEPTIONAL	Precise and specific verbs, nouns, and/or modifiers have been used appropriately to create clear images.
4	PROFICIENT	Some specific verbs, nouns, and/or modifiers have been used appropriately to create clear images.
3	SATISFACTORY	Few specific verbs, nouns, and/or modifiers have been used appropriately to create clear images, but general words are varied and correct.
2	LIMITED	General verbs, nouns, and/or modifiers have been used correctly. Images are vague.
1	POOR	General verbs, nouns, and/or modifiers have been used, often incorrectly or repetitively. Images are unclear.
0	INSUFFICIENT	Too little writing exists for a judgement to be formed. Writing that has been awarded an "Ins" for CONTENT is insufficient.

The words chosen by the student. The vocabulary category considers the precision and clarity of word choice (e.g., "mumbled" instead of "said," "canoe" instead of "boat", "wicked" instead of "bad").

REPORTING CATEGORY: CONVENTIONS
(Following the Conventions of Written Language Appropriately)

SCORE	DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE
5	EXCEPTIONAL Control of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization facilitates clear communication. Misspellings are easily decipherable. Dialogue, if present, may not be punctuated properly.
4	PROFICIENT General control of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization facilitates clear communication. Misspellings are generally decipherable. Dialogue, if present may not be punctuated properly.
3	SATISFACTORY Some control of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization facilitates communication. Misspellings are generally decipherable. Dialogue, if present, may not be punctuated properly.
2	LIMITED Lack of control of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization generally interferes with communication. Misspellings are often decipherable. Dialogue, if present, may not be punctuated properly.
1	POOR Lack of control of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization severely interferes with communication. Misspellings are generally undecipherable. Dialogue, if present, may not be punctuated properly.
0	INSUFFICIENT Too little writing exists for a judgement to be formed. Writing that has been awarded an "Ins" for CONTENT is insufficient.

The way in which the student uses standard conventions of language. This includes the use of standard spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

V. APPENDIX C

GENERAL IMPRESSION SCORING DESCRIPTORS FOR GRADE 4/5 PERSUASIVE/EXPOSITORY WRITING MODE (Can be adapted for your grade level)

5 Excellent

- exceptional clarity of communication
- has an evident, developed style
- creativity and specificity of detail which is suited to the purpose and relevant to the topic, including the stating of most reasons in the persuasive composition.
- vocabulary is specific, descriptive, vivid, and connotative
- exceptional thought and organization, including an evident beginning, middle, and ending
- very few errors of convention relative to the length

4 Very Good

- clarity evident, but atmosphere or style may not be found consistently throughout the paper
- appropriate amount of detail, including the use of many reasons in the persuasive composition some precise vocabulary
- displays good evidence of thought, and a beginning, middle, ending sequence
- some mechanical errors, but not so many that they interfere with readability or meaning
(this category may also include #5 excellent compositions that have many mechanical errors)

3 Average

- communicates satisfactorily, length is adequate to complete task
- satisfactory detail suited to purpose, including an attempt made at giving details in a persuasive paragraph
- uses vocabulary appropriate to topic and purpose
- mechanical errors interfere somewhat with the message and the readability.

2 Weak

- length is inadequate to complete the task
- lack of sufficient detail, inclusion of some irrelevant details
- creates an overall impression of disorder, and lacks a clear ending
- vague vocabulary
- mechanical errors greatly interfere with meaning

1 Poor

- length is inadequate to complete task
- cannot tell what the purpose or task is
- very few details and several of them are irrelevant
- mechanical errors interfere with meaning to the extent that the composition is nearly illegible

0 - No real communication at all

CONTENT

5 Exceptional

- choices and reasons are plausible
- paper represents exceptional thought

4 Proficient

- choices are plausible, and reasons are given for most choices
- paper represents a good deal of thought

3 Satisfactory

- most choices are plausible, and some are supported with reasons
- paper reflects some thought

2 Limited

- some choices are plausible
- very few or no reasons given for choices
- paper represents little thought

1 Poor

- most choices are implausible
- no reasons given to support choices
- no real thought evident in the paper

0 - too little writing exists for judgement to be made.

DEVELOPMENT

5 Exceptional

- displays coherent thought and organization, with obvious evidence of categorization and/or superordination/subordination
- supported to some degree by paragraphing and/or by transitionals (for example, because of this, etc.)
- includes evidence of introduction and closure

4 Proficient

- displays coherent thought and organization with some evidence of categorization and/or superordination/subordination

3 Satisfactory

- displays little coherent thought and organization
- categorization barely evident

2 Limited

- categorization not evident
- poorly organized

1 Poor

- no evident organization at all
- rambling and hard to follow

0 - too little writing exists for judgement to be made.

SENTENCE STRUCTURE

5 Exceptional

- variety of sentence type, length, and structure is used for effects such as emphasis
- coordination has been controlled, and subordination is used appropriately
- sentence fragments, if present, are used for effect

4 Proficient

- variety is evident
- coordination is seldom overused
- subordination is often used appropriately
- there are few inadvertent fragments

3 Satisfactory

- some variety evident, but coordination may be overused
- subordination is successfully attempted
- fragments are in evidence, but do not impede meaning

2 Limited

- little variety and some awkward structures
- overdependence on coordination
- subordination, if used, is inappropriate
- fragments are frequent and impede meaning

1 Poor

- sentences are immature and there are many repetitious patterns
- coordination is used almost exclusively
- fragments are common and impede meaning

0 - too little writing exists for judgement to be made.

VOCABULARY

5 Exceptional

- occasional specific concrete words selected to create vivid images or precise details
- word meanings are accurate and effective

4 Proficient

- some use of specific or concrete words adds clarity to the detail created
- most word meanings are accurate and effective

3 Satisfactory

- some words have been selected appropriately but general or abstract words are often used where specific or concrete words would have been more effective
- some word meanings may be inaccurate or ineffective

2 Limited

- general words are usually used where some specific words would have been more effective
- many word meanings may be inaccurate or ineffective

1 Poor

- words convey only vague or general meanings

0 - too little writing exists for judgement to be made.

CONVENTIONS

5 Exceptional

- communicative power is enhanced because of careful spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

4 Proficient

- communication is clear because of essentially correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

3 Satisfactory

- communication is adequate because of generally correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

2 Limited

- communicative power is reduced because of incorrect spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

1 Poor

- communicative power is very weak because of errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

0 - too little writing exists for judgement to be made.

GRANDE PRAIRIE SCHOOL DISTRICT #2357

LANGUAGE ARTS PRODUCT EVALUATION

GRADE THREE WRITTEN COMPOSITION

June 1984

TEACHER'S
MANUAL

I. Background

This test is part of a total language arts assessment research project in the District. The purposes of the test are as follows:

- A. To determine the number of students in the District who write to standards determined by a committee of teachers.
- B. To develop a descriptive statement of the characteristics of descriptive writing produced by Grade 3 students.
- C. To determine the reliability of holistic committee scoring procedures at this level.
- D. To compare holistic scoring which produces only one global score with that which produces scores in component areas of writing skills such as fluency, organization, sentence structure, and mechanics on such bases as:
 1. Time and cost
 2. Teacher satisfaction
 3. Reliability

District results from this test will be shared with everyone in the District. School results will be shared only with the school to which they pertain.

Attempts will be made to publish representative compositions receiving excellent, good, fair and poor grades and descriptions of them. These should prove useful to all teachers in setting realistic expectations for their students in the future.

The specific District objective to which this relates is as follows:

"Given a wide range of sensory experiences with an object, the student writes a description of a maximum of 100 words using appropriate vocabulary to identify a minimum of 6 attributes."

II. Administration Time Permitted

It is intended that adequate time be provided so that no student is penalized because of time pressure. Therefore, even though very few students are likely to use the full time allotment, they should be provided a minimum of two consecutive class periods, preferably at a time in which they are fresh (For example, 9:00-10:20 a.m. or 1:00 - 2:20 p.m.).

Alternate quiet activities such as recreational reading or worksheet assignments should be provided for those who finish early.

III. Use of Posters

You have been provided two or three color posters. Place them in your classroom so that all the students can easily see one of the posters from where they are seated. You might wish to divide the students into groups for this purpose. Try to avoid crowding of desks to prevent copying or "borrowing" of ideas.

Students may have questions about the posters. "What are those?" etc. Do not answer any such questions. Simply explain that they are to "paint a word picture of everything they can" in the scene. Students may also want to leave their desks for a "close look". This should not be permitted either, as there should be adequate detail to allow for their descriptive abilities without providing this assistance.

IV. Procedure

1. Group your students and posters as indicated in III above, so that all can easily see a poster.
2. Make sure that all students have pencils and an eraser and a clear desk.
3. Hand out the student test sheets, and read through the instructions with the students.
4. The I.D. Number area on the tests is not for the students' use, or for yours. Tell the students to ignore it.
5. If students ask the usual "how long should it be?" questions, tell them that it can be as long as they want - there are no limits. However, it has to say enough to "paint a complete word picture" of the scene.
6. Students can't use dictionaries or other aids. You should not supply them with words.
7. Students may use manuscript or cursive writing, whichever they are most comfortable with.
8. When students are clear about the instructions, have them begin. Circulate around the class to see that they have begun, but do not provide assistance.

After approximately 30 minutes, allow students a "stretch break" of one to five minutes.

9. As students complete their work, collect it from them and make sure they have recorded their names properly.
10. Group the completed tests alphabetically and forward them to Keith Wagner at Central Office.

PREAMBLE - In July 1984, four teachers worked as a team to evaluate approximately 250 Grade 3 written compositions. The compositions were a description of a hot air ballooning scene. The first task was to assess each composition for overall general impression on a scale of 0 to 5. To facilitate this task, the marking team used descriptors developed the previous year and outlined below. The team also developed descriptors for each of 5 sub-components: content, development, sentence structure, vocabulary, and conventions. All of the descriptors are outlined below:

GENERAL IMPRESSION SCORING DESCRIPTORS

5 Excellent

- exceptionally developed detail
- precise vocabulary - vocabulary displays a variety of
new and interesting words
 - comparisons create vivid impressions
- displays exceptional thought and organization
- shows some evidence of style
- a dominant impression may be evident
- few mechanical errors - punctuation
 - sentence structure
 - capitalization
 - spelling

4 Very Good

- well developed detail
- some precise vocabulary
- displays good evidence of thought and organization
- some mechanical errors - but these don't interfere with readability or meaning
- also includes Number 5 papers with many mechanical errors.

3 Average

- displays some thought and organization
- sufficient detail
- length is adequate to complete the task
- uses vocabulary appropriate to grade level
- mechanical errors interfere somewhat with the message and the readability.

2 Poor

- length is inadequate to complete the task
- lack of detail
- vague vocabulary - dull uninteresting words
- lack of thought and organization
- overall impression of disorder due to jumbled arrangement of ideas
- irrelevant details
- mechanical errors greatly interfere with message

1 Little or No Communication

- totally illegible
- no response
- completely off topic

CONTENT SCORING DESCRIPTORS

5 Exceptional

- specific details used to describe setting and activities
- creates an atmosphere through the use of the senses
- creates a vivid overall impression and give clear physical descriptions
- good use of imagery
- captures a dominant impression or sense of style

4 Proficient

- some specific details to describe setting
- some general sense of atmosphere is created
- appeals to most of the senses
- use of imagery is evident

3 Satisfactory

- evidence of specific appropriate details
- some attempt to create an atmosphere or overall impression
- attempts to use imagery

2 Limited

- few appropriate details
- very little attempt to create atmosphere
- limited appeal to senses
- very little use of imagery

1 Poor

- no appropriate details
- setting is not developed
- no sense of atmosphere
- no imagery

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for judgement to be made

DEVELOPMENT SCORING DESCRIPTORS

5 Exceptional

- displays coherent thought and organization
- there is evidence of paragraphing
- organized sequence of descriptions and events
- shows excellent sense of beginning and closure

4 Proficient

- displays good evidence of thought and organization
- good sense of beginning and closure
- may have some slight confusion in flow of ideas

3 Satisfactory

- descriptions are in generally coherent sequence
- some sense of closure is evident
- some disorganization of ideas

2 Limited

- limited sense of sequencing the descriptions
- absence of sense of closure
- weak sense of organization

1 Poor

- no sequencing
- no closure
- no evidence of organization

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for judgement to be made

SENTENCE STRUCTURES SCORING DESCRIPTORS

5 Exceptional

- good variety of sentence structures, type, length is used
- controlled use of co-ordination
- sentence fragments if evident are used for effect

4 Proficient

- some variety in sentence structure, type and length
- little over-use of co-ordination
- few sentence fragments

3 Satisfactory

- little variety in sentence structure, type and length
- some over-use of co-ordination
- some sentence fragments evident

2 Limited

- most sentences are simple sentences
- little variety in length and structure
- definite use of co-ordination
- may have many sentence fragments

1 Poor

- sentences are immature and repetitious
- almost exclusive use of co-ordination
- sentence fragments impede meaning

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for a judgement to be made

VOCABULARY SCORING DESCRIPTORS

5 Exceptional

- specific, concrete, interesting words have been selected to create vivid images and precise details
- denotative meanings are accurate and effective

4 Proficient

- frequent use of specific concrete words adds clarity to the detail created
- denotative meanings are most frequently accurate and effective

3 Satisfactory

- some use of specific, concrete words
- some use of general words
- denotations are mostly correct

2 Limited

- few specific concrete words
- most words are general
- some inaccuracy of meaning

1 Poor

- only vague, general words are used
- restricted choice of words
- inaccuracy of meaning

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for judgement to be made

CONVENTIONS SCORING DESCRIPTORS

5 Exceptional

- the communicative power of the composition is enhanced because of careful form, spelling, usage, punctuation and capitalization and neatness of writing.

4 Proficient

- communication is clear because of essentially correct form, spelling, usage, punctuation and capitalization
- few errors in proportion to length

3 Satisfactory

- some errors in form, spelling, punctuation, usage and capitalization but communication is adequate

2 Limited

- frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, usage and capitalization reduce communication
- work is not neatly done

1 Poor

- very weak in communication due to incorrect spelling, no punctuation and capitalization and poor grammar
- poor printing/writing make it very hard to read

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for a judgement to be made



LANGUAGE ARTS PRODUCT EVALUATION
THE EVALUATION OF WRITTEN COMPOSITION
GRADE FOUR/FIVE

TEACHER MARKING PACKAGE

November 1984

Scorers: Merv Sylven, Hillside Community School
Ben Kijek, Alexander Forbes School
Don Safron, Alexander Forbes School
Angus Sutherland, Swanavon Elementary School
Larry Walton, Swanavon Elementary School
Marlyss Moller, Swanavon Elementary School
Jean Duplessis, Avondale Elementary School
George Crisfield, Crystal Park School
Sharon Odell, Harry Balfour School
Consultant: Tom Maguire, University of Alberta
Supervisors: Keith Wagner, Deputy Superintendent
Lorne Radbourne, Acting Deputy Superintendent

The contents of this Teacher Marking Package are not intended to imply, either explicitly or otherwise, Alberta Education policy regarding the evaluation of students' writing skills or the evaluation of teaching performance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The District would like to thank all the people who contributed to this project: the teachers who administered the writing task, the scorers, the consultant and supervisors and the clerical staff. The improvement of written composition is a continuing goal of this District, and this project has not only provided some baseline data to help determine whether we are achieving that goal; it has also contributed to the professional growth of all involved.

D. R. Taylor
Superintendent of Schools

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I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In June, 1984 the Grande Prairie School District did an assessment of the writing competence of its grade four and five students. All grade four and five students were randomly assigned to write in either the narrative mode or the expository/persuasive mode. The following specific directions were give to teachers:

1. Background

This test of written composition is part of the Grande Prairie School District Language Arts Product Assessment Research Project. One of the research questions being investigated is whether students write as well in the expository persuasive mode as they do in the narrative mode. Consequently, students in your class have been randomly assigned to do either Writing Task A (expository/persuasive) or Writing Task B (narrative). Besides answering the above research question, other side benefits of this project include the following:

- A. You will get some feedback regarding how well students in your class performed in the various skills that make up written composition, compared to the performance of a larger sample of students. This information may be valuable to you in making future decisions regarding your instructional emphasis.
- B. Those teachers who participate in the scoring teams will gain experience in holistic methods of scoring. In addition, they will produce a holistic scoring handbook which might prove useful to you.

This test is meant to be administered over a two day period. This is to provide as realistic and desirable writing situation as possible. Students do their best writing when they have been provided some time to think about their ideas, and to discuss them with their peers.

2. Day One Instructions

In a double period block (approximately 70 to 90 minutes) hand out the test booklets and read through the two writing topics with the students. Explain that they may choose either topic, but regardless of the topic, they will be assigned by you to Writing Task A or Task B and will have no choice in that matter. Give them about 5 minutes to reread the topics, at the end of which they will be asked to select a topic. Then divide the class into groups of approximately 3 to 6 students who have chosen the same topic and have been assigned to the same Writing

Task. Tell the students that they will be given 15 minutes to discuss and share ideas about their Topic-Task. They are not to do any writing at this time. At the end of the 15 minutes, reorganize the class so that students work individually for the remainder of the period. (Approximately 40 minutes). Tell them that they can begin writing their compositions now, and will be given time to complete them and/or write a second draft the following day.

At the end of the period, collect their work to that point. They are not to be allowed to take their work home with them.

3. Day Two Instructions

On Day Two, students should be provided two consecutive class periods (from 70 to 80 minutes) in which to either complete their first drafts, edit, and revise, or write a second draft. Provide an alternative quiet activity for those who finish early.

The following guidelines should be shared with the students:

- A. There is no required length, but marking consideration will be given to the extensiveness or completeness of ideas expressed.

The composition can be one or more paragraphs, depending on what they feel is necessary to express their ideas in an organized way.

- B. Compositions should be handwritten, not printed.
- C. Pens should be used - not pencils.
- D. Students cannot use dictionaries or other aids, and the teacher (or friends) is not allowed to supply words, spellings, or other assistance.

4. Shipping Instructions

- A. Make sure that students have filled in the required information on the front page of the test booklet, and that the booklets are stapled together securely with the pages in order. Students should not write their names anywhere on their compositions - only on the front page of the test booklet.
- B. Bundle the test booklets up by class and forward them to Keith Wagner before June 30.

Thank you for your cooperation.

The following specific Instructions were give to students:

A. This is a test to see how well you can express your ideas in writing. Do your very best.

B. There are two topics. You will be given your choice of one of the two topics.

Each topic has two possible writing tasks. Your teacher will assign you to either Task A or Task B.

C. You will be given a chance to discuss your topic with other students for a few minutes before you start writing. You will start your writing, let it set over night, and complete a second draft the next day.

D. Your work should be done:

- (1) In handwriting, not printing.
- (2) In pen, not pencil.

E. Once you start writing, you won't be allowed to use a dictionary or other books, or to get help from your teacher or other students.

TOPIC I: CAMPING

Jason smiled broadly. It was the last hour of the last afternoon of the last day of school. Tomorrow he would be going camping with his mom and dad and sister. Jason thought of the fun they would have on this camping trip - a real camping trip with a tent and sleeping bags. They would even be cooking outside on a real fire.

Jason and his father were going to take their fishing poles along. Jason's mother and sister had been talking all week about the wild strawberries that grew in the open places in the woods near their camping spot. Jason's mouth watered as he thought of fresh trout cooked over an open fire and wild strawberries for dessert.

And there would be plenty for them all to do. They would be able to swim in the lake or ride horses from the stable down the road. Even walking through the woods watching for animals would be fun.

Jason thought of all of the possible adventures he could have exploring the woods with his sister. His smile increased. He could hardly wait for tomorrow to come.

Your teacher will assign you one of the tasks below. For your assigned task, write a composition that is well-organized and contains a variety of words, phrases, and sentences. Space is provided in this booklet for a first draft and a final copy.

TASK A

If you were planning a camping trip, what types of things would you want to take with you? Remember that you would need shelter, food, and clothing on your trip. Also, you might wish to include gadgets that would be useful for special purposes. Imagine that you would be camping for two days and could take only what you could put in the trunk of a car. Give reasons why you would take the things that you include.

TASK B

Write a story that tells what actually happens on Jason's camping trip, or on a camping trip that you went on. The story does not have to be true. Remember that an interesting story has a beginning, middle, and end. Also, a good story tells where the action took place, and who the story is about.

TOPIC II: TEACHER FOR THE DAY

All of the members of Mrs. Summer's Grade 6 class were looking forward to the following day, but no one was quite as excited as Lori. Tomorrow was the day that Lori was to be "teacher for a day". Her classmates had elected her for this prestigious position, and Lori had spent most of the afternoon planning tomorrow's activities with Mrs. Summer while the other children worked on their language arts assignment. Everything was ready now, and it looked like tomorrow would be a good day. The only thing that worried Lori was that Joel, the class trouble-maker and practical joker, had been giving her funny looks after class.

Your teacher will assign you one of the tasks below. For your assigned task, write a composition that is well-organized and contains a variety of words, phrases, and sentences. Space is provided in this booklet for a first draft and a final copy.

TASK A

If you were elected "teacher for a day", what kinds of activities would you plan for your classmates? Give good reasons for including the activities that you have chosen.

TASK B

Write a story that tells what happens on the day that Lori is "teacher for a day". Remember that a good story has a beginning, middle, and end, and tells who the story is about, and where the story takes place.

The tests were then collected, assigned a random identification number and scored by a team of grade 4/5 teachers during the first week of July. The papers were first scored holistically for a general impression score.

Holistic scoring is a process by which a written composition is assigned a mark in terms of how well it meets a predetermined set of criteria. In order to complete this task the team of teachers

established the criteria for both narrative and persuasive passages based on a scale of 0-5 with 0 being the lowest score awarded and 5 being the highest score given. The specific criteria for this is included in the next section of this document. Each member of the team read each paper and assigned it a mark which was recorded on a separate marking sheet. The mark was not put on the paper. Thus markers did not know the identity of the author or the mark awarded by other markers.

These papers were then rescored again in a holistic manner but this time in each of five writing components areas. Criteria were established for these five sub-components:

- Content
- Development
- Sentence Structure
- Vocabulary
- Conventions

The criteria for each of these components was based on the descriptors established for the June 84 Grade 6 provincial language arts exam. They can be found in the next section of this package. The same marking procedure as for general impression was followed.

II. SCORING CRITERIA AND EXAMPLES

A. The Criteria

GENERAL IMPRESSION SCORING DESCRIPTORS FOR NARRATIVE AND PERSUASIVE WRITING MODES

5 Excellent

- exceptional clarity of communication
- has an evident, developed style
- creativity and specificity of detail which is suited to the purpose and relevant to the topic, including the stating of most reasons in the persuasive composition.
- vocabulary is specific, descriptive, vivid, and connotative
- exceptional thought and organization, including an evident beginning, middle, and ending
- very few errors of convention relative to the length

4 Very Good

- clarity evident, but atmosphere or style may not be found consistently throughout the paper
- appropriate amount of detail, including the use of many reasons in the persuasive composition some precise vocabulary
- displays good evidence of thought, and a beginning, middle, ending sequence
- some mechanical errors, but not so many that they interfere with readability or meaning
(this category may also include #5 excellent compositions that have many mechanical errors)

3 Average

- communicates satisfactorily, length is adequate to complete task
- satisfactory detail suited to purpose, including an attempt made at giving details in a persuasive paragraph
- uses vocabulary appropriate to topic and purpose
- mechanical errors interfere somewhat with the message and the readability.

2 Weak

- length is inadequate to complete the task
- lack of sufficient detail, inclusion of some irrelevant details
- creates an overall impression of disorder, and lacks a clear ending
- vague vocabulary
- mechanical errors greatly interfere with meaning

1 Poor

- length is inadequate to complete task
- cannot tell what the purpose or task is
- very few details and several of them are irrelevant
- mechanical errors interfere with meaning to the extent that the composition is nearly illegible

0 - No real communication at all

CONVENTIONS - SCORING DESCRIPTORS FOR
NARRATIVE AND PERSUASIVE WRITING MODES

5 Exceptional

- communicative power is enhanced because of careful spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

4 Proficient

- communication is clear because of essentially correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

3 Satisfactory

- communication is adequate because of generally correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

2 Limited

- communicative power is reduced because of incorrect spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

1 Poor

- communicative power is very weak because of errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

0 - too little writing exists to make a judgement.

SENTENCE STRUCTURE - SCORING DESCRIPTORS FOR
NARRATIVE AND PERSUASIVE WRITING MODES

5 Exceptional

- variety of sentence type, length, and structure is used for effects such as emphasis
- coordination has been controlled, and subordination is used appropriately
- sentence fragments, if present, are used for effect

4 Proficient

- variety is evident
- coordination is seldom overused
- subordination is often used appropriately
- there are few inadvertent fragments

3 Satisfactory

- some variety evident, but coordination may be overused
- subordination is successfully attempted
- fragments are in evidence, but do not impede meaning

2 Limited

- little variety and some awkward structures
- overdependence on coordination
- subordination, if used, is inappropriate
- fragments are frequent and impede meaning

1 Poor

- sentences are immature and there are many repetitious patterns
- coordination is used almost exclusively
- fragments are common and impede meaning

0 - too little writing exists to make a judgement.

VOCABULARY - SCORING DESCRIPTORS FOR
NARRATIVE AND PERSUASIVE WRITING MODES

5 Exceptional

- occasional specific concrete words selected to create vivid images or precise details
- word meanings are accurate and effective

4 Proficient

- some use of specific or concrete words adds clarity to the detail created
- most word meanings are accurate and effective

3 Satisfactory

- some words have been selected appropriately but general or abstract words are often used where specific or concrete words would have been more effective
- some word meanings may be inaccurate or ineffective

2 Limited

- general words are usually used where some specific words would have been more effective
- many word meanings may be inaccurate or ineffective

1 Poor

- words convey only vague or general meanings

0 - too little writing exists to make a judgement.

CONTENT - SCORING DESCRIPTORS FOR
NARRATIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- events are plausible and consistent with purpose
- specific details develop character, setting, atmosphere, or events

4 Proficient

- events are plausible
- appropriate details present a description of characters, setting, or events

3 Satisfactory

- most events are plausible
- several details used to describe characters, setting, or events

2 Limited

- many events are plausible
- a few details are used to describe characters, setting, or events

1 Poor

- events are implausible
- no details used to describe characters, setting, or events

0 - too little writing exists to make a judgement.

CONTENT - SCORING DESCRIPTORS FOR
PERSUASIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- choices and reasons are plausible
- paper represents exceptional thought

4 Proficient

- choices are plausible, and reasons are given for most choices
- paper represents a good deal of thought

3 Satisfactory

- most choices are plausible, and some are supported with reasons
- paper reflects some thought

2 Limited

- some choices are plausible
- very few or no reasons given for choices
- paper represents little thought

1 Poor

- most choices are implausible
- no reasons given to support choices
- no real thought evident in the paper

0 - too little writing exists to make a judgement.

DEVELOPMENT - SCORING DESCRIPTORS FOR
NARRATIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- displays coherent thought and organization
- supported to some degree by paragraphing and/or by transitionals (before, after this, meanwhile)
- contains organized sequence of description and events, including excellence of beginning, middle, and closure

4 Proficient

- displays coherent thought and organization
- shows distinct beginning, middle, and end

3 Satisfactory

- generally coherent and organized
- both beginning and closure are evident

2 Limited

- some lack of coherence and organization
- closure may not be evident

1 Poor

- no evident organization at all
- rambling and hard to follow

0 - too little writing exists to make a judgement.

DEVELOPMENT - SCORING DESCRIPTORS
PERSUASIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- displays coherent thought and organization, with obvious evidence of categorization and/or superordination/subordination
- supported to some degree by paragraphing and/or by transitionals (for example, because of this, etc.)
- includes evidence of introduction and closure

4 Proficient

- displays coherent thought and organization with some evidence of categorization and/or superordination/subordination

3 Satisfactory

- displays little coherent thought and organization
- categorization barely evident

2 Limited

- categorization not evident
- poorly organized

1 Poor

- no evident organization at all
- rambling and hard to follow

0 - too little writing exists to make a judgement.

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for a judgement to be made

B. Applying the Criteria

Included here are twelve grade 4/5 papers on which to practice the practical application of this scoring method. Read each paper and by referring back to the descriptors assess a mark from 0-5 for each of the areas. You must remember to check the criteria for each sub-component before reading the paper to mark for that component. As a means of comparison, you can find the scores that the marking team awarded each paper by looking in the appendix section of this document.

It is important to refer always to the descriptors and mark according to how the paper meets those standards. Try not to compare papers to ones read previously.

Also, when marking for sentence structure you may have to mentally put in the correct punctuation - if the sentence structure is there the paper will be penalized in the conventions section for lack of punctuation, but shouldn't be penalized twice.

MARKING SHEET

Paper #	General Impression	Conventions	Sentence Structure	Vocabulary	Content	Develop
327						
528						
433						
2						
541						
523						
229						
368						
207						
51						
57						
266						

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

PLANNING A CAMPING TRIP

If I were to go camping for two days, I would need a very warm sleeping bag so I would be warm and comfortable during the night.

I would also bring food so I wouldn't go hungry.

And to cook the food I would bring cooking utensils, such as pots, pans, plates, and silverware.

I would also bring a flashlight so I could see at night, and some extra batteries.

Also, in case I got lost, I would need a map and compass to get home.

Some extra clothes, would probably also be smart, in case the ones you were wearing got dirty.

If it got cold or started to rain I would need a tent.

And don't forget about the first aid, insect repellent, and matches.

For recreational purposes I would bring fishing poles, hooks and other

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

fishing things if there was a lake or stream nearby.

But if there wasn't any lake or stream nearby I would bring a note book, and binoculars to go on a nature hunt. I would bring these recreational things incase I got bored.

O.k! And instead of a gun for protection against wolves or bears, bring a watchdog along! Because camping is alot more fun with a friend!

By: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

Camping

Hi my name is Lance. One friday after ~~school~~^{noon} I was walking home from school. When I got home I ~~asked~~^{asked} my mom what we were going to do my mom said we are going camping I said! then she asked if I had help her put all the stuff in the trunk of the car.

When we were finished my dad came home, me my mom and my dad walked up we eat, after we were finished eating we left.

When we got to spring lake we unpacked our tent, fishing rods, lawn chairs, sleeping bags, a gun, blanket for the picnic table and one flare gun after we finished unpacking and got everything setup it was getting late so me my mom and my dad went to sleep when we woke up in the morning we set breakfast.

after breakfast we went fishing for two hours, we caught 6 fish then we ~~ate the fish~~^{went back to} camp and after we ate the fish then we put all of the camping gear in the trunk then we started home. And that was the camping trip.

The End

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

we packed it up. lets check it. compass
tent, gas stove, knif, axe, gear,
sleeping bags, Bob-cat, maches, car,
gas, food, fishing poles. ok lets go.
clothing, now may we go yey yey
it will take a wold (dog) day. ron.

last one in is a drie pig splas
go get the conenew & will the
fire strted

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

Today is the day! We're leaving today on a camping trip right after lunch! I've got everything ready to be put in the car. My mom packed some goodies for the trip. We're all ready now, my brother as usual, is whining about not being able to take all of his stuffed animals!

Finally we're on our way to the campsite! My dad is driving, my mom is reading, my brother is sleeping and I'm coloring. It is so peaceful and quiet that soon I'm fast asleep. But two hours later I am awakened by a clap of thunder! Now it's not so peaceful and quiet it's pouring rain and thundering and lightening.

"Look for campsite number twenty four" my dad soon calls out. "Boy am I ever glad we're here" I said, "We're all out of goodies, all we have left are marshmallows!" "Too bad it's still drizzling and wet" said dad "I wanted to play some ball." "It will probably be dry by tomorrow" said mom. "Hey there's number twenty four!" called out Michael. "Well let's get some supper, I'm famished!" I said "Yeh me to what for supper mom" said Michael. "Hamburgers and vegetables" said mom. "I guess we'll have to try and start a fire" said

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

dad, "Michael you go and get some wood for a campfire, then we'll put up the tent."

"Mm Mm Are these Hamburgers ever good" I said. "Yes they're delicious" said dad. "Let's go frog hunting. Ali!" said Michael. "Oh alright" I said. Two hours went by and we had caught five frogs but let them go when our mom called, "Bedtime!" "We're coming" I called back.

The next morning when I got up everyone was eating breakfast. "Good morning Allison" my mom said.

"Good morning" I said as I sat down to breakfast.

"Today is going to be a big day" dad announced.

"I hope you got a good sleep" (Was he ever right, after breakfast our whole family played baseball, me and mom against Michael and dad. Michael and dad won 6-8, still it was alot of fun! After our game of baseball we had lunch it was dill pickles and ham sandwiches and for dessert we had wild strawberries. Then we went for a refreshing swim and a soccer game.

Then came supper it was superior! My dad cooked some steak and beans over a campfire on a grill. After supper we had a quiet evening roasting marshmallows and playing cards.

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

That night we all went to bed quite late which was 11:30 so we all slept in till 9:30.

For breakfast we cooked bacon, eggs and toast on a grill over a campfire "Today we are spending a day on the lake" said dad "Hooray!" We all shouted. After breakfast mom and I packed a lunch and we towed the boat out to the lake and off we went fishing rods and all! We fished until lunch which was hot dogs and fruit. We kept fishing until 5:00 so supper would be ready by 6:00.

We had a delicious supper of fish and wild strawberries.

At bedtime (which was 8:00 because it was going to be a long day tomorrow) I fell asleep as soon as my head reached the pillow! Tomorrow we were leaving!

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

Jason and his family were going on a camping trip.

On the way to the camping grounds they saw a big brown bear. The big brown bear hurried to the nearest bush and hid behind it.

Jason knew he was going to have fun. When Jason and his dad and mom and sister got to the grounds

They helped unpack all their things. Jason and dad put up the tent.

While mom and I went to get some wild berries to eat.

When we got back the tent was up and Jason and dad were sitting on the table ready for some wild berries.

Mom washed them and I put them on the table after we had the berries it was time for bed. When it was morning we packed up all our things and went home.

The End

Camping
(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

I am Michael East summer I went camping
I camp at wage port my mom and
dad set up the tent where will John was
hanging around I was coping it the
next day I was up for mom dad and John
I blow my bang up I put the podlas
in it I had the fishing gear in it I got a
not to mom and dad I bread the
gear to the back I fish all day I got
five fish. when I got back it was time
to go to bed the next morning we had
to go.

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

Teacher for a Day

In the morning, I would start with the every day work we do all the time. We would have Language Arts, and read in our readers and work in our Reading workbooks. We would do that from 9:00 to 10:00. Then from 10:00 to 10:30, we would probably correct the math work from yesterday and start with a new assignment in math. At 10:30 the children would go outside till 10:55. They would come in and I would tell them what to get out for next class, which would be Social Studies from 11:00 to 11:30. In Social Studies we would study "Should Canada Share it's Natural Resources", a unit we are taking. At 11:30 I would tell them to take out there reading books and read quietly, or if they had to exchange there books I would send them to the library row by row. At 11:50 the lunch bell would ring, so I would tell them to get there coats and line up at the door quietly. They would be dismissed for lunch, and I too would go home for my lunch. I would be back about five minutes before the children come back from recess. They would come in and have there next class out. I would have written it on the board. It would read "gyen".

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

I would send them to change and come back to the class room quietly and wait for me quietly in the class room. When they were all back we would go down to the gym and do stretches and play dodge ball or soccer baseball. After this they would change and come back to the class room. From 1:30 to 2:15 we would do French with a special teacher. After French it would be recess, I would line them up and send them to the playground. The teacher "me" would mark some work they did in Language Arts or any other subject. At 2:30 it would be spelling. I would have paper on their desk to write spelling words. I would read them until all the words are finished. At 2:45 we would have Science and do "Magnets" a nother unit we are studying. At 2:30 I would tell them to hand in the work they were doing so I could mark it.

If some kids were not done it would be homework, so that the real teacher wouldn't be mad. They would be dismissed quietly and leave. I would still stay and mark the work I didn't do. When I was finished I would put my stuff away and get my coat and shut off the lights.

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

Teacher for a Day

Lori's class chose her teacher for a day. Lori was planning what she was going to do. she decided to have spelling, french, helth, recess, music, ussr, lunch, math, langage arts, recess, wrighting physical education. There was Joel the prackal jocker that she was worried about, And what he was going to do. He gave me werd looks after school. ^{Next day} She was up at 6:00am

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

getting things red dy. Lori left at 7:30am and got there at 7:45am. Then she went down to the fodocopy machain and ran off spelling french, math, langage arts. Lori was red dy, she was still worried about Joel. It was 9:00am everylody started to come inclouding Joel with his bag full and there was know homework. Lori started them on spelling. It was french period then helth and recess. Then music,

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

U.S.S.R. and lunch. "Lori said

THANK GOD!" Then math,

language arts and recess. Writing

and physical Education. It was the

end of school, she said "it isn't easy

being teacher for a day!"

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

Teacher For a Day

First we should do the quick
quiz and then do handwriting and
then we will learn all about computers
and after we will clean our desks
and get ready for home time.

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

That afternoon, when she was on her way home, she was worried that Joel would do something wrong, that would make her look silly.

When she got home, she smelled the steak in the oven and forgot about Joel. She ate her supper and was going to bed.

Before she went to sleep, she remembered about Joel. She tried to think about something else, but she couldn't. Anyway, she finally got to sleep. She dreamed about the next day when she would be teacher. But for some strange reason, she was sick and couldn't go! Just then she heard a ghostly call. "Lorie, wake up! You will be late for school!" She was just opening her eyes. She thought she was still dreaming, because in her dream, she was still and slept in her dream! She jumped up. But then she remembered how tired she was and flumped back down. After a while, she glanced at her clock. It was eight thirty!

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

She got dressed in a hurry. Then, had a quick bowl of cereal, brushed her teeth, and ran to school. When she got there, the last bell was ringing. She raced into school. She was in the doorway now, looking around to see if Joll the pest was there. To her surprise, he wasn't there! She walked up to the teachers desk. "You may call the roll," said Mrs. Summers. Lori called out all the names in the class and only one wasn't there. "Pest!" She stepped up to the front of the class. "Now class," Lori said "I am going to hand the tests back for you to finish." Everybody groaned. Lori handed the tests back to glum faces. When the class had started, it was Lori's job to mark the spelling tests was fun at first, but she got so board, that after a while, she almost fell asleep! She decided that taking down stories was much more to her liking. She was just getting out of her chair, when the noon bell went. She waited for the

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

announcements to finish, and then dismissed the class.

She was on her way home, when she found that there was a huge mud puddle in front of her. She was going to step over it when a hand reached out of the hedge and pushed her over. She fell into the puddle with a splash! Then she heard a giggle. It was Joel! "I'll get you for this!" And she did to! That afternoon, she told the principle what had happened and how Joel was jelous that he didn't get elected. So all afternoon, Joel sat in the ofice face to face with the principle. The rest of the day went fine for Louie.

She knew that something was going on because of Joel's looks after school days. But had nothing to wor about now.

The rest of the day went fine without Joel. The class pest of the year.
The End

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

That day it's formally here
 9:00 Friday morning it's actually happening Lori gets
 to teach. First she have math. "We are going to
 have a quiz this afternoon. I hope every body
 studied". Right now let's have races first person in
 each row up to the board; put down 20 ^{14 4}/_{18 4} right Laura
 it's 14 ^{14 4}/_{18 4}. Know second person in each row up
 put down 10 ^{14 4}/_{18 4} right Jack it's 14 ^{14 4}/_{18 4} and Lori went
 through the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th then she went and got a
 film she came back with math patrol Lori started the
 film, during the film Lori walked around finally
 she came to Joel's desk she found him sleeping so she
 stoped the film, woke Joel up sent him into the hall and
 turned the film back on, it was recess time when
 the film was done, before she let them go outside
 she told them to stay outside. After recess they
 went on a nature walk. "Does anybody know
 what flower this is asked Lori?" "I know" said Joel.
 Joel had just fallen into a thorn bush Lori
 helped him out then they went back to the
 school

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

it was time for Linda Lori's class
is selling hot dogs Lori had a drink of orange
pop but she couldn't get any because somebody
plugged her straw, she knew it had to be Joel
so she gave him a rubber hot dog. Know it
after lunch and there having a party. Here's orange
pop popsi coke plus cake played games the Lori gave
them the quiz by the time every body was done
the quiz it was recess After recess they played
Joke Ball and Joel, Betty, Annette, Nina and
Jack were in the middle. First Joel was out then
Jack the Betty then annette then Nina then they
went back to the classroom and put up there chairs
and went home

(GOOD COPY OR FINAL DRAFT)

One day joel put a tie on the teacher's chair and then the teacher sent a note to Mr. Murrage and then Mr. Murrage asked joel to come in the office and then they had a talk about his behavior then he said you better smarten up joel, O.K. joel said and he said thank you for the talk Mr. Murrage and then Troy came walking along to the Bathroom and joel went to the Bathroom to talk about what happened in the office oh we had a talk about my behavior oh we better get back to class be for we get in trouble, from the teacher try being nice to her O.K. and think where your going to go when you die joel oh I'll be nice to her and I'll even give her some fruit all the grass and I'll even be nice to the kids in the school hello said joel to Lori and Lori said hello to joel said I think I have a little look in your left drawer, O.K. joel a h h h a frog now look in your right hand drawer, O.K. better not be a frog joel no it's not a frog joel said a box of candy + thank you joel, now look in your ten dollar bill thank you Lori and he gave every something too and Mr. Murrage liked his surprise and thanked him for it and then every body thanked him for being nice to every one in the school

III. PRACTICAL CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS

The holistic approach to marking identified components of student writing has several practical classroom applications.

It can assist the teacher in diagnosing strengths and weaknesses both in student performance and program delivery. This scoring method provides the teacher with very useful and appropriate feedback for reporting student progress and in planning individual program strategies. Having a standard set of criteria leads to a more objective and consistent evaluation of student writing.

Teacher marking time can be more effectively utilized by providing a greater focus for the evaluation of student writing. It is not necessary to mark every writing assignment for all components. If you have, for example, taught a lesson on the use of specific versus general words, you could mark the written assignment using only the vocabulary criteria.

Another application of the criterion is for students use in evaluating their own papers. It would be possible to put the criteria in a more simplified form so that students could gain some appreciation for the elements of good writing. They could grade their own performance and see how they could improve their written composition based on the marking criteria. Although students would probably experience some problem initially, this approach could be employed to develop skills in proofreading and editing both a student's own work or the work of others.

IV. RESULTS SUMMARY

1. (a) Overall District Results - Grade Four Written Composition

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Confidence Int.	
General Impression	2.8	.8	2.6	to 3.2
Content	3.1	.9	3.0	to 3.3
Development	3.1	.9	3.0	to 3.3
Sentence Structure	2.9	1.0	2.8	to 3.0
Vocabulary	3.0	.7	2.9	to 3.2
Conventions	2.9	.9	2.8	to 3.0
Average of 5 Components	3.0	.8	2.9	to 3.1

1. (b) Overall District Results - Grade Five Written Composition

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Confidence Int.	
General Impression	3.1	.9	3.0	to 3.2
Content	3.4	.9	3.3	to 3.5
Development	3.6	.9	3.5	to 3.7
Sentence Structure	3.3	.8	3.2	to 3.4
Vocabulary	3.4	.7	3.3	to 3.5
Conventions	3.3	.8	3.2	to 3.4
Average of 5 Components	3.4	.7	3.3	to 3.5

NOTE: By comparing class results to the above District results teachers can determine possible strengths and weaknesses in both student performance and teaching strategies.

2. Correlation Among Written Composition Variables

a) Grade 4

	Impr.	Cont.	Devl.	Sent.	Vocab.	Conv.	Averg.
Impression	1.00	.77	.76	.70	.74	.70	.85
Content		1.00	.66	.55	.76	.53	.80
Development			1.00	.79	.69	.76	.90
Sentence				1.00	.71	.83	.90
Vocabulary					1.00	.67	.87
Conventions						1.00	.88
Average of Sub-Comp							1.00

b) Grade 5

	Impr.	Cont.	Devl.	Sent.	Vocab.	Conv.	Averg.
Impression	1.00	.79	.72	.66	.74	.87	.84
Content		1.00	.66	.60	.83	.58	.86
Development			1.00	.72	.58	.73	.87
Sentence				1.00	.58	.79	.86
Vocabulary					1.00	.58	.82
Conventions						1.00	.86
Average of Sub-Comp							1.00

A correlation coefficient is an index of the linear relationship between two variables. A perfect correlation relationship is 1 (as one variable goes up the other goes up as well) but a correlation greater than .5 is considered significant.

3. (a) Percentiles for Written Composition Variables - Grade Four

Score	Impr.	Cont.	Devl.	Sent.	Vocab.	Conv.	Averg.
.7	1		1		1	1	
1.0	1	1	1	2	1	2	1
1.3	3	2	2	5	2	5	2
1.7	7	4	4	9	4	10	4
2.0	19	13	9	18	9	19	8
2.3	34	27	17	27	17	29	18
2.7	49	36	32	39	29	40	35
3.0	65	50	48	55	53	53	54
3.3	77	64	61	68	74	69	68
3.7	84	73	71	78	84	80	80
4.0	91	80	80	85	91	87	89
4.3	95	87	89	91	95	93	93
4.7	98	95	94	95	98	97	97
5.0	99	99	99	99	99	99	99

3. (b) Percentiles for Written Composition Variables - Grade Five

Score	Impr.	Cont.	Devl.	Sent.	Vocab.	Conv.	Averg.
1.3	2	1	1	1		1	
1.7	5	3	3	3		3	1
2.0	12	8	5	5	2	7	3
2.3	21	16	9	11	6	13	7
2.7	33	23	17	21	14	24	17
3.0	50	35	27	34	32	38	32
3.3	64	49	37	50	52	55	48
3.7	74	61	49	67	68	68	65
4.0	83	70	64	80	80	78	79
4.3	88	79	78	88	90	88	88
4.7	94	89	89	93	95	95	95
5.0	99	99	99	99	99	99	99

4. Reliability Study - Written Composition Marking

Grade	Scale	All Agrees	All Within 1	Disagree
Three	General Imp.	32%	90%	10%
	Content	30%	88%	12%
	Development	21%	80%	20%
	Sentence	23%	83%	17%
	Vocabulary	32%	91%	9%
	Conventions	34%	96%	4%
Four	General Imp.	32%	87%	13%
	Content	34%	89%	11%
	Development	24%	78%	22%
	Sentence	25%	80%	20%
Five	Vocabulary	39%	90%	10%
	Conventions	24%	81%	19%

Dr. Tom Maguire of the University of Alberta carried out the above inter-rater reliability study. Essentially, this is a statistical measure of the amount of agreement or disagreement among the raters who scored the papers. This type of study sheds light on the question of whether, in this type of scoring, there is adequate agreement among raters that the process can be considered reliable. Dr. Maguire's conclusion was that in terms of reliability, the judges or raters had done an excellent job. He suggested that it would be safe to use two raters, and in the event of disagreement, a third head scorer could cast a deciding vote.

5. Analysis of Variance Grade 4/5 Written Composition

(Scores are listed out of 15 possible)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>Mean Square</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Sig</u>	
Gen. Imp	Grade (A)	1	132.04	19.97	yes	Gr.4: 8.3
	Topic (B)	1	18.71	2.83		Gr.5: 9.2
	Task (C)	1	50.48	7.64	yes	Expository: 8.4
	AB	1	11.44	1.73		Narrative : 9.0
	AC	1	2.01	.30		
	BC	1	44.94	6.80	yes (see A below)	
	ABC	1	.54	.08		
	Within	547	6.61			

Content	Grade (A)	1	131.54	16.83	yes	Gr.4: 9.2
	Topic (B)	1	2.31	.30		Gr.5: 10.2
	Task (C)	1	6.02	.77		
	AB	1	2.24	.29		
	AC	1	.97	.12		
	BC	1	147.40	18.86	yes (see B below)	
	ABC	1	1.89	.24		
	Within	547	7.81			
Develop.	Grade (A)	1	239.44	33.87	yes	Gr.4: 9.4
	Topic (B)	1	79.06	11.19	yes	Gr.5: 10.8
	Task (C)	1	.09	.01		Teacher: 10.5
	AB	1	11.58	1.64		Camping: 9.8
	AC	1	19.03	2.69		
	BC	1	13.18	1.86		
	ABC	1	10.31	1.46		
	Within	547	7.07			
Sentence	Grade (A)	1	191.69	29.02	yes	Gr.4: 8.8
	Topic (B)	1	213.08	32.26	yes	Gr.5: 10.0
	Task (C)	1	274.96	41.63	yes	Teacher: 10.1
	AB	1	16.15	2.45		Camping: 8.8
	AC	1	4.28	.65		Expository: 8.6
	BC	1	13.42	2.03		Narrative :10.0
	ABC	1	8.92	1.35		
	Within	547	6.61			
Vocab.	Grade (A)	1	197.72	43.82	yes	Gr.4: 8.9
	Topic (B)	1	27.76	6.38	yes	Gr.5: 10.1
	Task (C)	1	35.59	8.18	yes	Teacher: 9.8
	AB	1	7.32	1.69		Camping: 9.3
	AC	1	.36	.08		
	BC	1	58.77	13.50	yes (see C below)	
	ABC	1	.77	.16		Expository: 9.2
	Within	547	4.35			Narrative : 9.7
Conven.	Grade (A)	1	173.65	25.04	yes	Gr.4: 8.7
	Topic (B)	1	99.92	14.41	yes	Gr.5: 9.8
	Task (C)	1	17.48	2.52		Teacher: 9.7
	AB	1	24.52	3.54		Camping: 8.8
	AC	1	9.34	1.35		
	BC	1	9.29	1.34		
	ABC	1	.88	.13		
	Within	547	6.93			

Aver.	Grade (A)	1	183.66	37.60	yes	Gr.4: 9.0
of 5	Topic (B)	1	55.56	11.37	yes	Gr.5: 10.2
	Task (C)	1	347.54	7.11	yes	Teacher: 9.9
	AB	1	10.41	2.13		Camping: 9.3
	AC	1	2.58	.53		
	BC	1	35.40	7.25	yes (see D below)	
	ABC	1	.44	.09		Expository: 9.3
	Within	547	4.89			Narrative : 9.8

In all cases, the averages for grade 5 were significantly higher than grade 4. In those cases where "Topic" was significant, the "Teaching" mean was higher than the "Camping" mean. In those cases where "Task" was significant, the "Narrative" mean was higher than the Expository mean.

The BC interaction was significant in the cases of: General Impression, Content, Vocabulary, and Average of 5 Components. Generally, this resulted from an unexpectedly high value for the narrative papers written on the topic of teaching.

	A Impression		B Content		C Vocabulary		D 5 Sum.	
	Exp.	Nar.	Exp.	Nar.	Exp.	Nar.	Exp.	Nar.
Teach.	8.2	9.5	8.7	10.2	9.0	10.3	9.3	10.4
Camp.	8.5	8.6	10.0	9.4	9.3	9.3	9.2	9.3

V. APPENDIX A - ANSWER GUIDE

Following are the marks that the marking team gave each paper.

MARKING SHEET

Paper #	General Impression	Conventions	Sentence Structure	Vocabulary	Content	Develop
327	4	5	4	4	4	5
528	3	3	3	3	2	4
433	1	1	2	3	2	2
2	5	5	5	5	5	5
541	2	4	4	3	2	4
523	1	0	1	1	1	2
229	5	4	4	4	4	5
368	3	3	3	4	2	3
207	2	1	1	2	1	3
51	4	4	5	5	5	5
57	3	2	3	3	3	3
266	2	2	3	3	2	2

V. APPENDIX B**GENERAL IMPRESSION SCORING DESCRIPTORS FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MODE****5 Excellent**

- exceptionally developed detail
- precise vocabulary - vocabulary displays a variety of
new and interesting words
 - comparisons create vivid impressions
- displays exceptional thought and organization
- shows some evidence of style
- a dominant impression may be evident
- few mechanical errors - punctuation
 - sentence structure
 - capitalization
 - spelling

4 Very Good

- well developed detail
- some precise vocabulary
- displays good evidence of thought and organization
- some mechanical errors - but these don't interfere with readability or meaning
- also includes Number 5 papers with many mechanical errors.

3 Average

- displays some thought and organization
- sufficient detail
- length is adequate to complete the task
- uses vocabulary appropriate to grade level
- mechanical errors interfere somewhat with the message and the readability.

2 Poor

- length is inadequate to complete the task
- lack of detail
- vague vocabulary - dull uninteresting words
- lack of thought and organization
- overall impression of disorder due to jumbled arrangement of ideas
- irrelevant details
- mechanical errors greatly interfere with message

1 Little or No Communication

- mechanical errors interfere with meaning to the extent that the composition is nearly illegible
- completely off topic

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for judgement to be made

CONTENT SCORING DESCRIPTORS
FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- specific details used to describe setting and activities
- creates an atmosphere through the use of the senses
- creates a vivid overall impression and gives clear physical descriptions
- good use of imagery
- captures a dominant impression or sense of style

4 Proficient

- some specific details to describe setting
- some general sense of atmosphere is created
- appeals to most of the senses
- use of imagery is evident

3 Satisfactory

- evidence of specific appropriate details
- some attempt to create an atmosphere or overall impression
- attempts to use imagery

2 Limited

- few appropriate details
- very little attempt to create atmosphere
- limited appeal to senses
- very little use of imagery

1 Poor

- no appropriate details
- setting is not developed
- no sense of atmosphere
- no imagery

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for judgement to be made

DEVELOPMENT SCORING DESCRIPTORS
FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- displays coherent thought and organization
- there is evidence of paragraphing
- organized sequence of descriptions and events
- shows excellent sense of beginning and closure

4 Proficient

- displays good evidence of thought and organization
- good sense of beginning and closure
- may have some slight confusion in flow of ideas

3 Satisfactory

- descriptions are in generally coherent sequence
- some sense of closure is evident
- some disorganization of ideas

2 Limited

- limited sense of sequencing the descriptions
- absence of sense of closure
- weak sense of organization

1 Poor

- no sequencing
- no closure
- no evidence of organization

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for judgement to be made

SENTENCE STRUCTURES SCORING DESCRIPTORS
FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- good variety of sentence structures, type, length is used
- controlled use of co-ordination
- sentence fragments if evident are used for effect

4 Proficient

- some variety in sentence structure, type and length
- little over-use of co-ordination
- few sentence fragments

3 Satisfactory

- little variety in sentence structure, type and length
- some over-use of co-ordination
- some sentence fragments evident

2 Limited

- most sentences are simple sentences
- little variety in length and structure
- definite use of co-ordination
- may have many sentence fragments

1 Poor

- sentences are immature and repetitious
- almost exclusive use of co-ordination
- sentence fragments impede meaning

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for a judgement to be made

VOCABULARY SCORING DESCRIPTORS
FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- specific, concrete, interesting words have been selected to create vivid images and precise details
- denotative meanings are accurate and effective

4 Proficient

- frequent use of specific concrete words adds clarity to the detail created
- denotative meanings are most frequently accurate and effective

3 Satisfactory

- some use of specific, concrete words
- some use of general words
- denotations are mostly correct

2 Limited

- few specific concrete words
- most words are general
- some inaccuracy of meaning

1 Poor

- only vague, general words are used
- restricted choice of words
- inaccuracy of meaning

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for judgement to be made

CONVENTIONS SCORING DESCRIPTORS
FOR DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MODE

5 Exceptional

- the communicative power of the composition is enhanced because of careful form, spelling, usage, punctuation and capitalization and neatness of writing.

4 Proficient

- communication is clear because of essentially correct form, spelling, usage, punctuation and capitalization
- few errors in proportion to length

3 Satisfactory

- some errors in form, spelling, punctuation, usage and capitalization but communication is adequate

2 Limited

- frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, usage and capitalization reduce communication
- work is not neatly done

1 Poor

- very weak in communication due to incorrect spelling, no punctuation and capitalization and poor grammar
- poor printing/writing make it very hard to read

0 Insufficient

- too little writing exists for a judgement to be made

V. APPENDIX C - STUDENT BLOOPERS

- In health, the bodies were coming along real well.
- Beans we are going to bring for fast travel.
- Susan thought for awhile, but she couldn't because the photocopier was broken.
- And this one word I'm about to write will scare the hell out the bugs around the camp - RAID!
- She told her class to get ready for P.G.
- Walking through the flowers at "Bushard" Gardens.
- He asked Lori how the kids were
"Like angels" she replied ...
"Well, maybe Hell's Angels"
- If I give the kids recess they will respect me more.
- At 12:30 we get noon.
- They spread the tent out and put the pigs in the ground.
- Then it was summer holidays and Lori moved to Singapore and got eaten by a snake.
- Lori Picklehoper

GRANDE PRAIRIE SCHOOL DISTRICT #2357

LANGUAGE ARTS PRODUCT EVALUATION

WRITTEN COMPOSITION ASSESSMENT

GRADE FOUR/FIVE

June 1984

TEACHER'S MANUAL

ADMINISTRATION DIRECTIONS

I. Background

This test of written composition is part of the Grande Prairie School District Language Arts Product Assessment Research Project. One of the research questions being investigated is whether students write as well in the expository persuasive mode as they do in the narrative mode. Consequently, students in your class have been randomly assigned to do either Writing Task A (expository/persuasive) or Writing Task B (narrative). Besides answering the above research question, other side benefits of this project include the following:

- A. You will get some feedback regarding how well students in your class performed in the various skills that make up written composition, compared to the performance of a larger sample of students. This information may be valuable to you in making future decisions regarding your instructional emphasis.
- B. Those teachers who participate in the scoring teams will gain experience in holistic methods of scoring. In addition, they will produce a holistic scoring handbook which might prove useful to you.

This test is meant to be administered over a two day period. This is to provide as realistic and desirable writing situation as possible. Students do their best writing when they have been provided some time to think about their ideas, and to discuss them with their peers.

II. Day One Instructions

In a double period block (approximately 70 to 90 minutes) hand out the test booklets and read through the two writing topics with the students. Explain that they may choose either topic, but regardless of the topic, they will be assigned by you to Writing Task A or Task B and will have no choice in that matter. Give them about 5 minutes to reread the topics, at the end of which they will be asked to select a topic. Then divide the class into groups of approximately 3 to 6 students who have chosen the same topic and have been assigned to the same Writing Task. Tell the students that they will be given 15 minutes to discuss and share ideas about their Topic-Task. They are not to do any writing at this time. At the end of the 15 minutes, reorganize the class so that students work individually for the remainder of the period. (Approximately 40 minutes). Tell them that they can begin writing their compositions now, and will be given time to complete them and/or write a second draft the following day.

At the end of the period, collect their work to that point. They are not to be allowed to take their work home with them.

III. Day Two Instructions

On Day Two, students should be provided two consecutive class periods (from 70 to 80 minutes) in which to either complete their first drafts, edit, and revise, or write a second draft. Provide an alternative quiet activity for those who finish early.

The following guidelines should be shared with the students:

1. There is no required length, but marking consideration will be given to the extensiveness or completeness of ideas expressed.

The composition can be one or more paragraphs, depending on what they feel is necessary to express their ideas in an organized way.

2. Compositions should be handwritten, not printed.
3. Pens should be used - not pencils.
4. Students cannot use dictionaries or other aids, and the teacher (or friends) is not allowed to supply words, spellings, or other assistance.

IV. Shipping Instructions

1. Make sure that students have filled in the required information on the front page of the test booklet, and that the booklets are stapled together securely with the pages in order. Students should not write their names anywhere on their compositions - only on the front page of the test booklet.
2. Bundle the test booklets up by class and forward them to Keith Wagner before June 30.

Thank you for your cooperation.

V. Additional Information

My memo of February 6 and information regarding scoring techniques are appended.

PREAMBLE - In July 1984, nine teachers worked as a team to evaluate approximately 550 Grade 4/5 written compositions. Half of the compositions were narrative; half were expository/persuasive. The first task was to assess each composition for overall general impression on a scale of 0 to 5. The team also developed descriptors for each of 5 sub-components: content, development, sentence structure, vocabulary, and conventions. All of the descriptors are outlined below:

GENERAL IMPRESSION SCORING DESCRIPTORS

5 Excellent

- exceptional clarity of communication
- has an evident, developed style
- creativity and specificity of detail which is suited to the purpose and relevant to the topic, including the stating of most reasons in the persuasive composition.
- vocabulary is specific, descriptive, vivid, and connotative
- exceptional thought and organization, including an evident beginning, middle, and ending
- very few errors of convention relative to the length

4 Very Good

- clarity evident, but atmosphere or style may not be found consistently throughout the paper
- appropriate amount of detail, including the use of many reasons in the persuasive composition some precise vocabulary
- displays good evidence of thought, and a beginning, middle, ending sequence
- some mechanical errors, but not so many that they interfere with readability or meaning

(this category may also include #5 excellent compositions that have many mechanical errors)

3 Average

- communicates satisfactorily, length is adequate to complete task
- satisfactory detail suited to purpose, including an attempt made at giving details in a persuasive paragraph
- uses vocabulary appropriate to topic and purpose
- mechanical errors interfere somewhat with the message and the readability.

2 Weak

- length is inadequate to complete the task
- lack of sufficient detail, inclusion of some irrelevant details
- creates an overall impression of disorder, and lacks a clear ending
- vague vocabulary
- mechanical errors greatly interfere with meaning

1 Poor

- length is inadequate to complete task
- cannot tell what the purpose or task is
- very few details and several of them are irrelevant
- mechanical errors interfere with meaning to the extent that the composition is nearly illegible

0 - No real communication at all

CONVENTIONS - (Narrative and Persuasive Task)

5 Exceptional

- communicative power is enhanced because of careful spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

4 Proficient

- communication is clear because of essentially correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

3 Satisfactory

- communication is adequate because of generally correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

2 Limited

- communicative power is reduced because of incorrect spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

1 Poor

- communicative power is very weak because of errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization

SENTENCE STRUCTURE - (Narrative and Persuasive Task)

5 Exceptional

- variety of sentence type, length, and structure is used for effects such as emphasis
- coordination has been controlled, and subordination is used appropriately
- sentence fragments, if present, are used for effect

4 Proficient

- variety is evident
- coordination is seldom overused
- subordination is often used appropriately
- there are few inadvertent fragments

3 Satisfactory

- some variety evident, but coordination may be overused
- subordination is successfully attempted
- fragments are in evidence, but do not impede meaning

2 Limited

- little variety and some awkward structures
- overdependence on coordination
- subordination, if used, is inappropriate
- fragments are frequent and impede meaning

1 Poor

- sentences are immature and there are many repetitious patterns
- coordination is used almost exclusively
- fragments are common and impede meaning

VOCABULARY - (Narrative and Persuasive Task)

5 Exceptional

- occasional specific concrete words selected to create vivid images or precise details
- word meanings are accurate and effective

4 Proficient

- some use of specific or concrete words adds clarity to the detail created
- most word meanings are accurate and effective

3 Satisfactory

- some words have been selected appropriately but general or abstract words are often used where specific or concrete words would have been more effective
- some word meanings may be inaccurate or ineffective

2 Limited

- general words are usually used where some specific words would have been more effective
- many word meanings may be inaccurate or ineffective

1 Poor

- words convey only vague or general meanings

CONTENT - (Narrative Task)

5 Exceptional

- events are plausible and consistent with purpose
- specific details develop character, setting, atmosphere, or events

4 Proficient

- events are plausible
- appropriate details present a description of characters, setting, or events

3 Satisfactory

- most events are plausible
- several details used to describe characters, setting, or events

2 Limited

- many events are plausible
- a few details are used to describe characters, setting, or events

1 Poor

- events are implausible
- no details used to describe characters, setting, or events

CONTENT - (Persuasive Task)

5 Exceptional

- choices and reasons are plausible
- paper represents exceptional thought

4 Proficient

- choices are plausible, and reasons are given for most choices
- paper represents a good deal of thought

3 Satisfactory

- most choices are plausible, and some are supported with reasons
- paper reflects some thought

2 Limited

- some choices are plausible
- very few or no reasons given for choices
- paper represents little thought

1 Poor

- most choices are implausible
- no reasons given to support choices
- no real thought evident in the paper

DEVELOPMENT - (Narrative Task)

5 Exceptional

- displays coherent thought and organization
- supported to some degree by paragraphing and/or by transitionals (before, after this, meanwhile)
- contains organized sequence of description and events, including excellence of beginning, middle, and closure

4 Proficient

- displays coherent thought and organization
- shows distinct beginning, middle, and end

3 Satisfactory

- generally coherent and organized
- both beginning and closure are evident

2 Limited

- some lack of coherence and organization
- closure may not be evident

1 Poor

- no evident organization at all
- rambling and hard to follow

DEVELOPMENT - (Persuasive Task)

5 Exceptional

- displays coherent thought and organization, with obvious evidence of categorization and/or superordination/subordination
- supported to some degree by paragraphing and/or by transitionals (for example, because of this, etc.)
- includes evidence of introduction and closure

4 Proficient

- displays coherent thought and organization with some evidence of categorization and/or superordination/subordination

3 Satisfactory

- displays little coherent thought and organization
- categorization barely evident

2 Limited

- categorization not evident
- poorly organized

1 Poor

- no evident organization at all
- rambling and hard to follow

I.D. NUMBER

GRANDE PRAIRIE SCHOOL DISTRICT #2357

WRITTEN COMPOSITION TEST

GRADE FOUR/FIVE

June 1984

STUDENT BOOKLET

STUDENT'S NAME _____

SCHOOL _____

TEACHER'S NAME _____

WRITING TOPIC - Circle One
Camping
Teacher For A Day

WRITING TASK - Circle One
Task A
Task B

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS

1. This is a test to see how well you can express your ideas in writing. Do your very best.
2. There are two topics. You will be given your choice of one of the two topics.

Each topic has two possible writing tasks. Your teacher will assign you to either Task A or Task B.

3. You will be given a chance to discuss your topic with other students for a few minutes before you start writing. You will start your writing, let it set over night, and complete a second draft the next day.
4. Your work should be done:
 - (1) In handwriting, not printing.
 - (2) In pen, not pencil.
5. Once you start writing, you won't be allowed to use a dictionary or other books, or to get help from your teacher or other students.

TOPIC I: CAMPING

Jason smiled broadly. It was the last hour of the last afternoon of the last day of school. Tomorrow he would be going camping with his mom and dad and sister. Jason thought of the fun they would have on this camping trip - a real camping trip with a tent and sleeping bags. They would even be cooking outside on a real fire.

Jason and his father were going to take their fishing poles along. Jason's mother and sister had been talking all week about the wild strawberries that grew in the open places in the woods near their camping spot. Jason's mouth watered as he thought of fresh trout cooked over an open fire and wild strawberries for dessert.

And there would be plenty for them all to do. They would be able to swim in the lake or ride horses from the stable down the road. Even walking through the woods watching for animals would be fun.

Jason thought of all of the possible adventures he could have exploring the woods with his sister. His smile increased. He could hardly wait for tomorrow to come.

Your teacher will assign you one of the tasks below. For your assigned task, write a composition that is well-organized and contains a variety of words, phrases, and sentences. Space is provided in this booklet for a first draft and a final copy.

TASK A

If you were planning a camping trip, what types of things would you want to take with you? Remember that you would need shelter, food, and clothing on your trip. Also, you might wish to include gadgets that would be useful for special purposes. Imagine that you would be camping for two days and could take only what you could put in the trunk of a car. Give reasons why you would take the things that you include.

TASK B

Write a story that tells what actually happens on Jason's camping trip, or on a camping trip that you went on. The story does not have to be true. Remember that an interesting story has a beginning, middle, and end. Also, a good story tells where the action took place, and who the story is about.

TOPIC II: TEACHER FOR THE DAY

All of the members of Mrs. Summer's Grade 6 class were looking forward to the following day, but no one was quite as excited as Lori. Tomorrow was the day that Lori was to be "teacher for a day". Her classmates had elected her for this prestigious position, and Lori had spent most of the afternoon planning tomorrow's activities with Mrs. Summer while the other children worked on their language arts assignment. Everything was ready now, and it looked like tomorrow would be a good day. The only thing that worried Lori was that Joel, the class trouble-maker and practical joker, had been giving her funny looks after class.

Your teacher will assign you one of the tasks below. For your assigned task, write a composition that is well-organized and contains a variety of words, phrases, and sentences. Space is provided in this booklet for a first draft and a final copy.

TASK A

If you were elected "teacher for a day", what kinds of activities would you plan for your classmates? Give good reasons for including the activities that you have chosen.

TASK B

Write a story that tells what happens on the day that Lori is "teacher for a day". Remember that a good story has a beginning, middle, and end, and tells who the story is about, and where the story takes place.